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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR



6 September 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Melvin R. Laird  
The Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT : The Woo-Sung Class Minesweeper  
in Haiphong Harbor

1. Attached for your eyes only is a memorandum prepared in response to the request you made to Mr. Carver on 30 August. Per your request, we have reviewed the evidence on the 136 foot Woo-Sung class minesweeper known to have been in Shanghai on 17 May 1972 and spotted in Haiphong harbor on 15 August, making this review in an effort to ascertain when and how this minesweeper reached Haiphong.

2. As the attached memorandum indicates, the available evidence on how the minesweeper got to Haiphong -- i.e., its exact route -- is not conclusive, hence on this topic our memorandum can only sketch certain plausible hypotheses. There are, however, two salient points with respect to this vessel. First, it is the only vessel of its type known to be in existence. Second, while in China -- i.e., when known to be under Chinese control -- it carried the identifying pennant number 535. Photographs of it in Haiphong, however, clearly show it carrying the new pennant number 01. This suggests that the vessel may have been turned over to the North Vietnamese and, hence, that it is now no more "Chinese" than the MIG 17s and 19s of the North Vietnamese Air Force.

/s/

Richard Helms  
Director

Attachment

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